



# Govan Home and Education Link Project

## Annual Report April 2012 – March 2013

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## **Foreword from Joanne Aitken, Project Coordinator**

Govan Home and Education Link Project (Govan HELP) continued to grow during 2012 – 2013, and saw an increase in both the number of activities on offer and the number of families benefiting from our services.

Fariha Thomas worked as Project Coordinator from October 2012 to August 2013 while I was on maternity leave. I would like to thank her for her hard work and commitment in helping Govan HELP continue to flourish during this time.

Anne McGrath, Project Worker and Elaine McCrindle, Administrator both left Govan HELP during the year. Ashley Daniels provided some temporary Administration during the year, while Angela McGregor worked as Volunteer Development Worker. I would like to thank them all for their hard work at Govan HELP and wish them the very best in their future endeavours.

This year Govan HELP welcomed Janet Weir, Project Worker and Toni McFadyen, Administrator to the Project. Their work plus the efforts of our existing staff, volunteers and Board of Directors are greatly appreciated.

Govan HELP wishes to thank our funders who have supported our work during 2012 – 2013. They are Glasgow City Council, The Cattanach Trust, BBC Children In Need, The Henry Smith Charity, the Voluntary Action Fund, The Bank of Scotland Foundation and The Trades House (Commonwealth Fund).

Lastly, and possibly most importantly, I would like to thank our service user families for accessing our services this year. We hope they see Govan HELP as a valuable service within Govan.

## **Introduction**

Established in 1995 Govan Home and Education Link Project (formerly Hill's Trust Home School Community Project) is a family education support project with offices in Govan Road Campus.

The Project offers a range of supports to children and their families attending Broomloan Nursery, Govan Family Learning Centre, Pirie Park, Riverside and St Saviours Primaries.

This report will provide an overview of the developments and work undertaken by Govan Home and Education Link Project from April 2012 – March 2013.

Govan Home and Education Link Project:

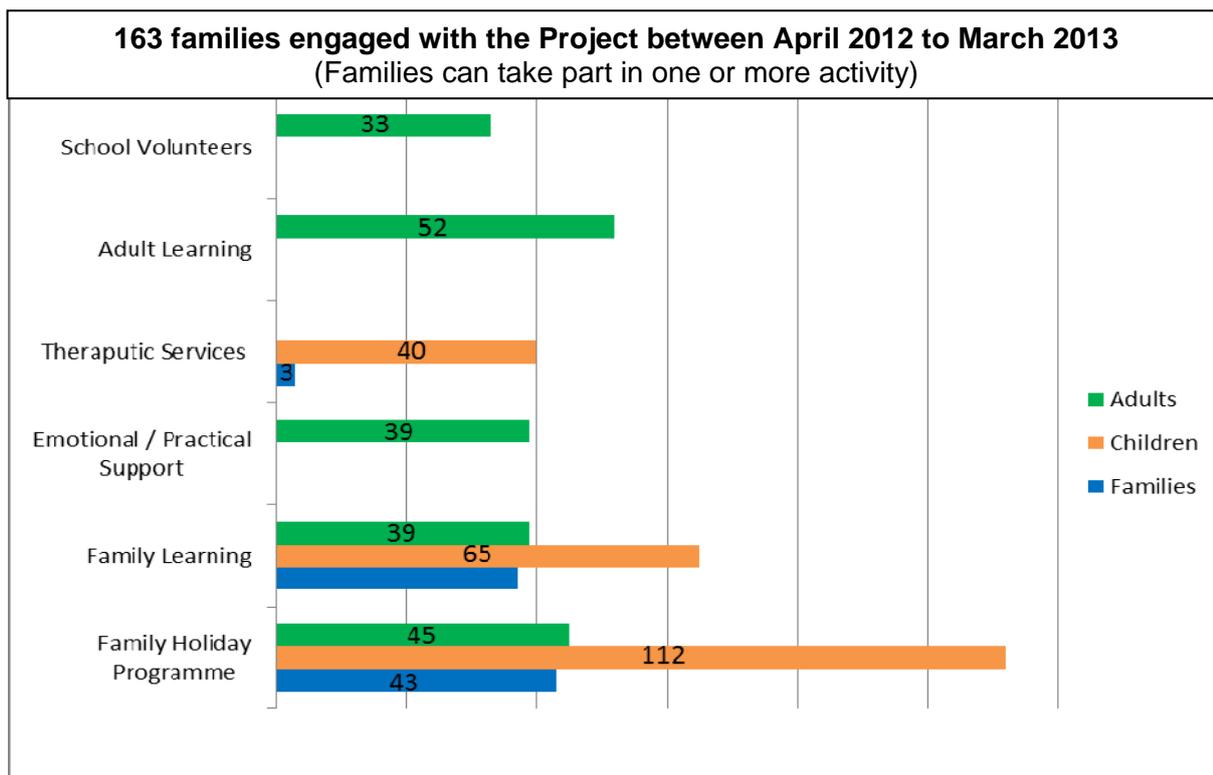
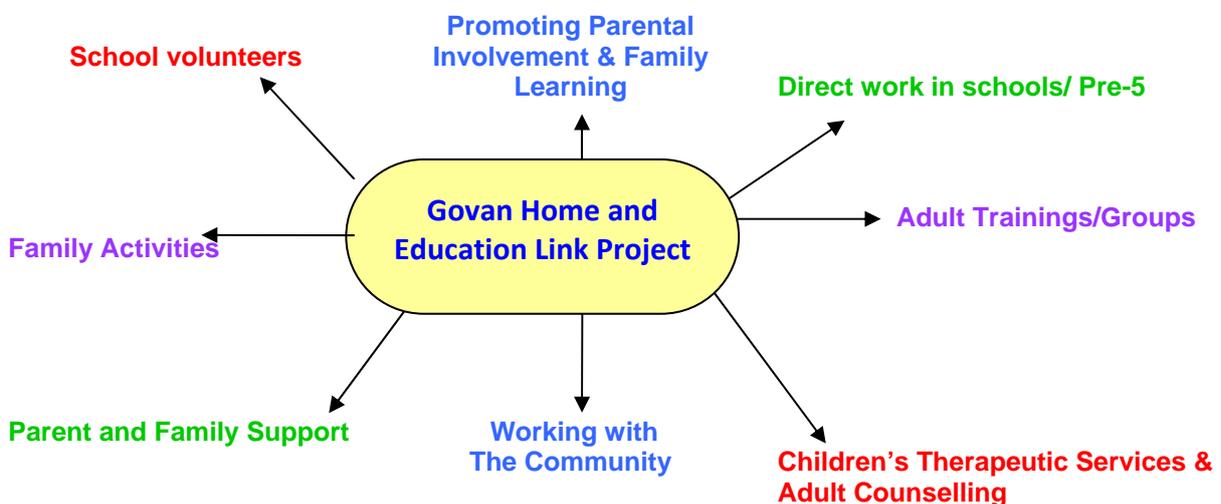
- Creates a community of support for pupils and their families from pre-5 establishments & primary schools in Govan.
- Promotes parental involvement in education through family learning initiatives.
- Supports pupils and their families with school based issues such as attendance, behaviour, learning and family issues.
- Delivers individual Play Therapy and Therapeutic Groupwork to children whose previous experiences and early years traumas are hindering learning.
- Offers a range of practical and emotional supports to families on a needs led basis.
- Delivers individual and group Positive Parenting Programmes and individual Filial (Family) Therapy.
- Delivers an Adult Counselling Service.

- Trains and administers PVG (Protection of Vulnerable Groups) Disclosure for parents and community members allowing them to become school helpers in Pirie Park, Riverside and St Saviours Primaries.
- Delivers a Family Holiday Programme and Family After School Club.
- Works in partnership with other organisations to organise and facilitate adult training courses.
- Runs a parents' support group "Time for Me".
- Organises women's events.
- Works in partnership with voluntary and statutory organisations organising community events.

## Aims and Objectives

Govan Home and Education Link Project aims to:

**"Support children & families within Govan to develop their potential through learning, therapeutic services and community partnerships"**



## **1. Promoting Parental Involvement in Education & Family Learning**

Govan HELP recognises that children learn best when their parents/carers are actively involved in their education.

We understand that some parents may themselves have had negative experiences of education as children, and may not fully understand the value the school/nursery places on them as a stakeholder. The Project aims to redress this by challenging any negative education perceptions and helps parents to see the valuable role they play.

Promoting parental involvement underpins everything that we do and our presence in Govan Road Campus allows Govan HELP to facilitate a number of initiatives in order to achieve this.

Parental involvement can only be achieved by fostering positive relationships with parents, which starts as soon as the child enrolls, and develops as they progress through nursery and school.

Parental involvement has been achieved this year through the recruitment of parent volunteers within the schools, and through Adult Training Programmes, which all help to promote lifelong learning. Both of these initiatives are outlined later in this report.

## **2. Direct Work within Schools/Nursery**

Govan HELP is based in Govan Road Campus, which it shares with Broomloan Nursery, Riverside and St Saviours Primaries. Time has been taken to build strong working relationships with pupils, their families and staff.

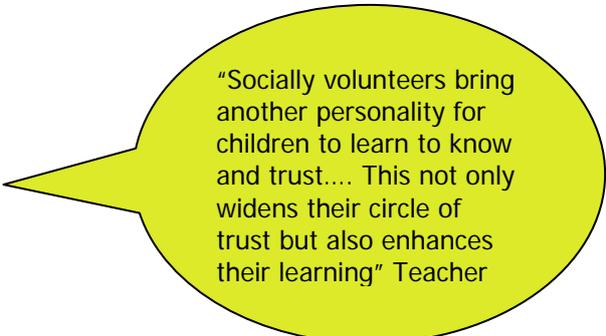
Project staff attended parents nights and P1 school induction sessions to introduce parents/carers to Govan HELP. We also built on relationships by taking time to greet families in the playground and by helping out regularly in the playground.

Govan HELP staff provided inputs to the schools' in-service training days, explaining the purpose of the project, the range of supports available and referral processes. Project staff also spent some of their breaks in school staffrooms to enable informal contact with school staff.

School and pre-5 staff are the main referrers to Govan HELP and may refer/signpost a family to the Project who they feel will benefit. They may request a particular service if a child is presenting school based difficulties (low attendance, behaviour difficulties, not accessing learning).

## **3. School/Nursery Volunteers**

This year Govan HELP undertook a comprehensive review of its Volunteer Helper Programme, which enables parents/carers and community members to become regular volunteers within the schools.



"Socially volunteers bring another personality for children to learn to know and trust.... This not only widens their circle of trust but also enhances their learning" Teacher

With a grant from The Voluntary Action Fund we were, for the first time, able to employ a Volunteer Development Worker, Angela McGregor who was in post from November 2012 to April 2013. Angela assisted Govan HELP in overhauling its volunteer programme allowing for the tightening of procedures to ensure volunteers have a positive volunteering experience.

The majority of volunteers are parents and by encouraging their involvement we aim to strengthen home school partnerships. Parents/carers are the best role models to their children and their presence in the school helps motivate children and can ultimately raise attainment.



For many parents, helping in the school is the first step in returning to education or employment. Volunteering helps raise confidence, self-esteem and increases skills.

Volunteers undertake an initial 2 session induction, facilitated by project staff looking at issues including roles and responsibilities, child centred communication and dealing with issues of concern. Training sessions were held this year in Govan Road campus (for Riverside and St Saviours Primaries) and Pirie Park primary.

All volunteers undertake a PVG (Protection of Vulnerable Groups) Enhanced Disclosure check. These are administered and paid for by CRBS (Central Registered Body for Scotland), with the Project Coordinator who is a "lead signatory" for Govan HELP.

"Volunteering brings a feeling of community spirit and inclusion"  
Parent Volunteer

In 2012-13 Govan HELP recruited 17 new volunteer helpers, adding to the 15 established volunteers.

3 Volunteer lunches were organised during the year to thank volunteers for their work. These lunches also give volunteers a chance to meet each other; to find out what else is happening within Govan HELP; and to share ideas about what else the Project can provide to enhance volunteer experiences.

In March 2013 questionnaires distributed to all volunteers allowed us to evaluate this service. The results of this were:

- All volunteers agreed that the volunteer induction training had been useful.
- 60% agreed volunteering had helped them to "increase confidence & improve skills".
- 80% agreed that volunteering had helped them "meet new people and make new friends".
- 50% agreed volunteering had improved their "relationship with their children's school".
- 60% agreed that volunteering had helped them to be "better equipped to support their children's learning at home".

#### **4. Adult Training Courses and Groups**

Cardonald College once again helped us to provide adult training courses in Govan Road Campus.

Having parents present and learning within the campus sets an excellent example to pupils, who come to understand that learning is life-long. There is a high take up of adult courses in the campus and this may be because we have worked hard to make parents feel welcome and included.

Parents, who may have been out of education for years, often lack the confidence to attend a new learning environment themselves. Courses in the campus allow them a “taster” of what is available at college and allows them to participate alongside other parents.

This year weekly **ESOL (English as Second or Other Language)** classes took place attended by 24 parents. This group is invaluable to migrant and asylum seeker families who are often unable to be fully involved in their child’s education because their first language is not English.

Other courses include a 3 session **Emergency First Aid** class which was attended by 6 parents.

A new 6 session course “**Safe Surfing for Parents**” introduced parents to the highlights and “dangers” of the internet and was completed by 7 parents. A free crèche was provided for this after school parents’ class.

A 5 session **Stress Management** course was also facilitated by Cardonald College and completed by 9 parents.

Govan HELP staff shared information with parents on a variety of courses including adult literacy classes, thus increasing confidence, skills, employability and again resulting in better home school partnerships.



A **Confidence Building** course was facilitated by our Project Worker Janet Weir, and 2 parents successfully completed this course.



Our “**Time for Me**” **Parents Support Group** continued this year with a range of activities, and bringing parents together for friendship, support and information.

It is held during school hours so parents can have some time free from the demands of childcare. The group is of real benefit to parents who are isolated and friendships have developed as a result.

The timetable of activities is suggested by the parents themselves. Project staff then organise the speakers, demonstrations and workshops.

10 parents attended one or more “**Time for Me**” activities including a Christmas Crafts session, Personal Safety Workshop (facilitated by WISE Women) and Drugs Awareness for Parents session.



In addition a grant from Strathclyde Police, via the South Gender Based Violence Network, allowed for a women's event to be held in November 2012, during the **16 Days of Action to Eliminate Violence against Women**.

This event was held in Riverside Hall and included information stalls (Strathclyde Police, WISE Women, Domestic Violence Project, Scottish Women's Convention, Cardonald College); free beauty and relaxation tasters; live entertainment and a free prize raffle.

34 women and 10 children attended the event.

## **5. Family Support**

The Project understands that issues at home can negatively impact on the child at school & nursery, leading to poor concentration, tiredness, and irritability. School attendance and timekeeping can also be affected.

Similarly it is difficult to link parents successfully into school/nursery life, education or employment if they are experiencing family, financial or emotional problems.

The Project therefore offers support to families to ensure that the family is coping to its best ability and the child is "freed up" to work towards her/his potential within school.

Parents can access Govan HELP for support on any issue. The Project can offer direct support or signpost/refer parents to specialist resources within the area or citywide.



**Emotional Support** – Project staff are not qualified counsellors but use listening and solution focussed counselling skills to support parents. The Project also offers emotional support by making referrals and escorting parents to counselling services. This is often to help them deal with their own experiences, including childhood traumas or relationship issues.

Govan HELP has been fortunate to have the services of a Volunteer Counsellor Julian Boyle who this year offered weekly individual and person centred counselling support to 7 parents.

Overall the project provided significant emotional support to 17 parents throughout the year.

**Practical Support** – Govan HELP can help advocate on behalf of parents and assist them in accessing services. This includes letters of support to housing associations; help in accessing benefits; training or employment; and assistance in completing forms. Help with forms is of particular benefit to parents with literacy issues, or those whose first language is not English.

The Project also offers support to asylum seeker and migrant families who require assistance integrating into Govan and Ibrox, and coping with the challenges of a new country.

In addition the Project supports homeless families who have been placed in temporary homeless accommodation and support is offered while they await permanent housing.

This year 30 parents/carers received a range of 1:1 practical support.

Christmas is an expensive and stressful time for families, especially for those on low incomes. Each year Govan HELP supports parent applications for financial support from **Clyde Action Cash for Kids**. This year we distributed £4875 for 195 children.

Each year at Christmas the SECC donates carnival tickets and these were distributed to 10 vulnerable families who we felt would benefit from an outing over the Christmas holidays.

**Interagency Work** - The Project works in partnership with statutory organisations including social work, education, health, and psychological services, as well as a large number of voluntary organisations. Project staff liaise on a daily basis with other professionals and attend child protection planning and review meetings to offer professional feedback, and to support families in attendance. Project staff also attend Children's Hearings.

**Positive Parenting** - Promoting positive parenting is a major feature of Govan HELP. The Project will initiate regular meetings with parents and school/nursery staff to look at the child's behaviour and help develop strategies for consistency between the home & school.

Parents call into the Project office on a daily basis to talk about issues and difficulties they are experiencing with their children. The Project takes time to listen and offers both emotional and practical parenting support. 7 parents received individual parenting support, while a further 7 were supported in their interactions with their children at our Family Activity Group. A further 3 parents received parenting support, via our Filial Therapy service, which is outlined later in the report.

#### Case Study

Susan\* has an 8 year old son, Craig\* at Govan Road Campus. Govan HELP knew Susan and Craig through their participation in project initiatives including the weekly Family Activity Group. Susan attended our Govan HELP Women's Event in November and we helped her access Clyde Action Cash for Kids.

In January Susan disclosed domestic violence to project staff. She said the Family Activity Group allowed Craig and her to keep "out of the way" when her ex partner was not working, and was at home drinking.

Project staff offered intensive support to help Susan leave this relationship including help accessing housing; completing benefit forms and helping her furnish her new home. We liaised with Craig's school to support him during this transition.

Govan HELP referred Susan to the Domestic Violence Project for specialist help and also to a Triple P group to help her look at her parenting strategies.

Susan is now settled in her own tenancy and has taken part in further Govan HELP activities including adult learning courses.

Susan is now interested in gaining employment.

*"Govan HELP has helped me feel stronger as an individual. It is a great organisation that always sticks its neck out for families. It is good it is in the school so it's accessible to parents."* Susan

## **6. Children's Therapeutic Services**

Since 2005 Govan HELP has run an individual **Play Therapy** service for children, aged 3 – 12 years, whose adverse life experiences are hindering learning.

For the last 5 years this has been funded by Children In Need and our Play Therapist, Keeley Morris is employed on a freelance basis.

Children referred for Play Therapy will have experienced difficulties and trauma within their lives including domestic violence, bereavement, abuse, parental drug or alcohol misuse, poor attachments and separation. Play Therapy also benefits children with additional support needs, behavioural and social difficulties.

Schools/nursery, other organisations and parents themselves can refer children for this support.



The Play Therapist meets with the child for 45 minutes, at the same time each week, and in a private playroom, within the child's learning establishment.

We believe that seeing the child in their school/nursery proves easier for the child as this is an environment they are familiar with and comfortable in. They do not have the same level of anxiety they would have if they were, for example, to attend a specialist clinic.

During 2012-13 we provided individual Play Therapy support to 27 children aged 3 - 12 years. Due to the complex difficulties of the children referred to us this year, the average length of Play Therapy interventions was 21 sessions.

In addition the Play Therapist offers **Therapeutic Groupwork**, for up to 4 children at a time, to support self-esteem, confidence and resilience. During the year 1 group was held in each primary school and 13 children participated overall. Due to the level of difficulty 5 of these children went on to also receive individual Play Therapy support.

Govan HELP has this year also developed its **Filial Therapy** service and the Play Therapist worked individually with 3 parents.

Filial Therapy involves taking the principles of Play Therapy and sharing them with the parent. The aim is to help parents develop their own play skills with their children, thus strengthening family relationships, creating a more relaxed family environment and helping parents to become more aware of their children's emotional needs.

Govan HELP staff are also involved with families receiving Therapeutic Services and offer additional, complementary family support.

### Case Study

Jane\*\* was referred for Play Therapy by nursery staff, who were concerned about her levels of anxiety. In particular Jane was very frightened if she saw an accident in the street, or even a child having a nose bleed in nursery. Witnessing these could cause her distress for days afterwards and she would often refuse to go back to the place where she had seen the accident. Jane also had an erratic sleep pattern and often slept with her mum. She was a very fussy eater. Jane could be bossy to other children in nursery and did not have many friends, preferring to spend her time with her Nursery Keyworker. She would also not play with children in the street.

Having access to Play Therapy helped Jane to become noticeably more confident in all areas of her life. With the support of Play Therapy and family support, from Govan HELP staff, Jane was able to establish a better night-time routine and sleep in her own bed. Supporting Jane's transition into Primary One helped her to settle well into the school environment. Jane has successfully completed her P1 year and now happily plays with children in her community.

*“Jane\* has more confidence since working with Keeley. Before she would not go anywhere with anyone but me. Now she will go out with friends. She used to get very upset, and would scream, if she saw someone in the street in crutches or with a walking stick. She was scared they were going to fall! This has now really improved and she can walk past people without getting upset. Working with Keeley has been the best thing that has happened to Jane” Parent*

*“Jane used to come to school very upset and anxious. Play Therapy helped Jane as it enabled her to build a good relationship with an adult, Keeley who could provide reassurance. Following Play Therapy Jane is much happier, is learning at school and enjoys it”. P1 Teacher*

## 7. Family Activities

**Family Holiday Programme** – Govan HELP remains open during the school holidays and this is the opportunity to offer support to families who struggle during these times.

Each year the Project organises a Family Holiday Programme of day trips and other activities.



The programme aims to alleviate the boredom & stress some families experience over the holidays; allows families participate in activities they would otherwise not experience; and helps strengthen family & community relationships.

During the Easter holidays a trip was organised to the **Glasgow Science Centre** attended by 16 families (25 adults & 28 children).

Throughout the summer holidays there were day trips to **Queens Park, Pollok Park Family Day and Blair Drummond Safari Park**. In addition Govan HELP assisted families to take part in the **“Story Lab Reading Challenge”** at Ibrox Library.

27 families (30 adults/48 children) took part in one or more activity as part of the Summer Family Holiday Programme.

In December a trip to the **Christmas Pantomime** at The Kings Theatre was organised for 12 families (12 adults/16 children) including those who had received support through the Therapeutic Services.

During the February mid-term break a trip to **“Amazonia”** took place attended by 10 families (13 adults/17 children).

For younger children Govan HELP and The Village Storytelling Centre ran **“Wee Tales”** sessions during the Easter, summer and October breaks. 23 families attended Wee Tales course of the year. These families included 24 adults and 39 children.

A total 43 families took part in our holiday programmes over the course of the year including 45 adults and 112 children.

“The family activity group allows both parents and children to free their minds”  
Parent

**Family Activity Group** – The group was held on a weekly basis after school in three blocks (April to June, October to December and from February to March). During the course of the year 37 families attended the group, including 39 adults and 65 children.

The purpose of this group is to give families the opportunity to interact in free fun activities including games, cookery, arts & crafts and trips. This programme is in partnership with Plantation Productions, who facilitate the arts and crafts session, while Elderpark Housing provided a cookery tutor.

## **8. Partnership Working**

Govan HELP work relies heavily on effective partnership working. This has allowed Govan HELP to successfully run activities such as the adult education classes and family activities. Sharing knowledge and cross referral ensures our work complements that of others but does not duplicate, allowing us to maximise the benefit of our time, expertise and resources.

Govan HELP is an active participant on the South Gender Based Violence Group and during the **16 Days of Action to Eliminate Violence against Women** campaign organised a women's event.

Project staff attend the **Voluntary Sector Voice** network meetings, which aims to share good practice and promote partnership working in the voluntary sector across South West Glasgow.

In addition we have regularly engaged with **Govan and Craigton Integration Network** and linked with them on a range of issues affecting migrants, asylum seekers and refugees.

During 2012 – 2013 Govan HELP received support from Chris Luke, Social Enterprise Advisor, **Jobs and Business Glasgow**. Chris's input has been invaluable to Govan HELP and he has assisted the management board with its governance; facilitated a staff development day in February 2013 and has helped identify successful funding streams.

The Project has continued to increase its profile and this year linked with a number of local and national organisations, and networks. This includes Cardonald College, CAMHS (Children & Adolescent Mental Health), Clyde Action Cash for Kids, East Pollokshields Mobile Crèche, Elderspark Housing Association, GCVS (Glasgow Council Voluntary Sector), Glasgow City Council, Glasgow Life, Glasgow & Clyde NHS, Govan and Craigton Integration Network, Govan Lifelink, Jobs & Business Glasgow, Money Matters, GYIP (Govan Youth Information Project), Homestart, Occasions Creche, The Pearce Institute, Pollok Integration Network, Plantation Productions, Psychological Services, Quarriers, Starter Packs, Strathclyde Police, Tea in the Pot, the Village Storytelling Centre, and the learning establishments which make up Govan Road Campus and Govan Learning Community.

### **Publicity**

Parents are kept informed about the project via our bi-monthly **Newsletters**, which are sent home to families via school bag drops, keeping them up to date on activities within the project and community.

The project has a website which is a great information tool for service users, partner organisations and funders. Regular updates are made to ensure people can see what the project has going on at all times.

This year we updated our **Children's Activity Directory** with times, venues and contact details of a variety of clubs within Govan and surrounding areas. This directory is available to any families looking for activities to keep their children active outside of school hours.

## **Govan Home and Education Link Project Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors is made up of parents, school/nursery staff and community representatives. Its role is to oversee Govan Home and Education Link Project and ensure it meets its objectives in the best possible manner. The Board meets monthly during the school year. Sub Committees have been established to deal with personnel issues and review of policies. During this year the Board reviewed and revised many of its key policies and procedures to improve effectiveness and governance.

Office-bearers include the Chairperson and Treasurer.

The Project Coordinator is line managed by the Chairperson.

Our accounts are audited annually by Wylie & Bisset.

## **Govan Home and Education Link Project Board of Directors for 2012/2013**

Barbara Ferguson	Chairperson (Acting)
Ferhana Bata	Treasurer
Eileen Allan	(Appointed 20/11/12)
Sheila Angus	(Appointed 29/01/13)
Louise Brimelow	
Barbara Brown	(Resigned 03/10/12)
Jane Robertson	(Resigned 03/10/12)
Carol Fisher	(Resigned 30/04/13)
Joe Quinn	(Appointed 26/06/12, Resigned 22/08/12)
Shamas Yusuf	(Appointed 03/10/12)

## **Govan Home and Education Link Project staff team:**

Project Coordinator – Joanne Aitken / Fariha Thomas (maternity cover)

Administrator – Elaine McCrindle (to September 2012)/ Ashley Daniels (April to January 2013) /Toni McFadyen (appointed January 2013)

Project Worker – Anne McGrath (April to August 2012) /Janet Weir (appointed October 2012)

Play Therapist – Keeley Morris

Volunteer Development Worker – Angela McGregor (October to April 2013)

## **Volunteers actively involved or trained during the year:**

Barbara Ferguson, Ferhana Bata, Julian Boyle, Lorna Campbell, Ashley Daniels, Heather Dundas, Barbara Ferguson, David Gallagher, Theresa Gallagher, Nicole Gilogley, Clair Graham, Malgorzata Glaz, Tony Macari, Vivien Opiloka, Susan Packer, Ronald Reid, Sharlene Rielly, Moyna Sethy, Lynne Scholes, Vivienne Shaw, Jean Wilson, Shamas Yusuf

### **Plans for 2013 - 2014**

- To further develop services in response to the needs of pupils and their families
- To secure continued and sustained funding including via community based fundraising initiatives.
- To build on our relationships with partner organisations including primary schools and pre-5 establishments.
- To seek opportunities for further strengthen governance.